

Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) Opioid Prescribing Report Technical Document

Background

The Health Care Authority (HCA) is sending out opioid prescribing reports as part of the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) Prescription Drug Overdose grant. These reports are intended to inform providers of their prescribing practices to support quality improvement efforts. These reports look at three measures of opioid prescribing by prescriber specialty. The metrics used in this report mirror the [Dr. Robert Bree Collaborative Opioid Prescribing Metrics](#) but are tailored to HCA's Medicaid population where applicable. The best practices recommendations reflect the [CDC's guidelines for prescribing opioids](#).

Data Source

HCA Medicaid claims and Washington State Department of Health Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMP).

Population

Medicaid clients with pharmacy benefit coverage

Time Period

Calendar year 2017

Excludes

- Patients with cancer history in the last two years
- Patients receiving hospice care during time of prescription
- All prescriptions for buprenorphine

Definitions

- Days Supply in Quarter: sum of the days supply for all opioid prescriptions prescribed during the calendar quarter, including overlapping prescriptions
- Morphine equivalent dose (MED): calculated on milligrams per unit multiplied by dispensed quantity, multiplied by the MED conversion factor, then sum the MED per quarter and divide by 90 days
- Chronic Use (regardless of MED): ≥ 60 days supply of opioids prescribed in the calendar quarter
- High Dose (chronic): ≥ 60 days supply of opioid prescriptions that are ≥ 90 mg/day MED prescribed in the calendar quarter
- Concurrent (chronic): ≥ 60 days supply of opioid prescriptions plus ≥ 60 days supply of sedative hypnotics, benzodiazepines, carisoprodol, and/or barbiturates prescribed in the same calendar quarter
- Prescriber: Clinician licensed to prescribe an opioid and prescribing to Medicaid clients during calendar year 2017



Metrics

The report is based on three metrics: Chronic Use, High Dose, and Concurrent.

Each metric is broken down into three percentages as shown on the prescribing report:

- All prescribers
- Prescriber specialty
- Prescriber specific (specific to their specialty)

Prescribers are categorized into either:

- Primary Care
 - e.g. nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pediatricians, family medicine, internal medicine etc.
- Surgeons
 - e.g. oral surgeons
- Specialists
 - e.g. physiatrist, pain medicine, sports medicine, behavioral health, dentists etc.
- Other
 - e.g. pharmacists, clinic, hospital, student, chiropractor, dietician etc.

The methodology developed to categorize prescribers begins with the taxonomy code, which identifies many prescribers such as dentists, students, suppliers, etc. Those without a listed taxonomy are put in “Other.” Then, the provider type code is used which identifies physicians, surgeons, specialists, nurse practitioners etc. in conjunction with the specialty codes, which identifies types of surgeons and specialists. If the specialty code is blank, then the provider type code is used which is more generic and the providers are placed in the general practice category.

The metrics are calculated by calendar quarter but are presented as a full year of data (calendar year 2017) excluding duplicated counts—ensuring that each patient is only counted once (distinct) per prescriber. Each metric requires a chronic supply of opioids (≥ 60 days). The High Dose and Concurrent metrics are subsets of the Chronic Use metric.

The tables below detail the technical specifications of how the metrics were calculated. Starting from left to right, under the ‘Metric’ column you will find each metric listed and to the right of the Metric column are numerator and denominator definitions as well as an example calculation for ‘All Prescriber,’ ‘Prescriber Specialty’ and ‘Prescriber Specific.’

Chronic Use (Regardless of MED)

Technical Specifications				
Metric				
<p>Chronic: ≥60 days supply <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>*Multiple prescribers can be attributed to a patient receiving a chronic supply of prescription opioids. For example, the patient may have received 30 days supply from one prescriber and 30 days supply from another prescriber in the same quarter. Both prescribers will have this patient in their patient count and are eligible to receive a prescribing report depending on their numbers.</p>		All prescriber	Prescriber specialty	Prescriber specific
	Numerator	Number of patients with at least one chronic (≥60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the calendar quarter from any prescriber	Number of patients with at least one chronic (≥60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the calendar quarter from any identified prescriber specialty	Number of patients with at least one chronic (≥60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the calendar quarter from identified prescriber*
	Denominator	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the calendar quarter from any prescriber	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the calendar quarter from any identified prescriber specialty	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the calendar quarter from identified prescriber
	Example Calculation	<p>Number of distinct patients with at least one chronic (≥ 60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the quarter from any provider = 33,769</p> <p>Number of distinct patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the year from any prescriber = 259,319</p> <p><i>All Prescribers:</i> $\frac{33,769}{259,319} = 13.0\%$</p>	<p>Number of distinct patients with at least one chronic (≥ 60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the quarter from any identified prescriber specialty = 31,997</p> <p>Number of distinct patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the year from any identified prescriber specialty = 132,909</p> <p><i>All Prescribers:</i> $\frac{31,997}{132,909} = 24.1\%$</p>	<p>Number of patients with at least one chronic (≥60 days supply) opioid prescription dispensed during the year from identified prescriber = 80</p> <p>Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population with at least one opioid prescription in the calendar quarter from identified prescriber = 300</p> <p><i>Prescriber Specific:</i> $\frac{80}{300} = 26.7\%$</p>

High Dose

Technical Specifications				
Metric				
Chronic: ≥60 days supply <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *Multiple prescribers can be attributed to a patient receiving an opioid prescription that is ≥90 mg/day MED. In which case, both prescribers will have that patient in their patient count and may be eligible for a prescribing report depending on their numbers.		All prescriber	Prescriber specialty	Prescriber specific
	Numerator	Number of patients prescribed chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) ≥90 mg/day MED in the calendar quarter from any prescriber	Number of patients prescribed chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) ≥90 mg/day MED in the calendar quarter from any identified prescriber specialty	Number of patients for which the identified prescriber has prescribed an opioid for, that are on chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) for ≥90 mg/day MED in the calendar quarter*
	Denominator	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids in the calendar quarter from any prescriber	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids in the calendar quarter from any identified prescriber specialty	Number of patients prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids by identified prescriber in the calendar quarter
	Example Calculation	Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply and ≥90 MED, any prescriber = 5,989 Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply, any MED, any prescriber = 33,769 $\text{All Prescribers: } \frac{5,989}{33,769} = 17.7\%$	Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply and ≥90 MED, any identified prescriber specialty = 5,576 Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply, any MED, any identified prescriber specialty = 31,997 $\text{All Prescribers: } \frac{5,576}{31,997} = 17.4\%$	Number of patients for which the identified prescriber has prescribed an opioid for, that are on chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) for ≥90 mg/day MED in the calendar quarter = 67 Number of patients prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids by identified prescriber in the calendar quarter = 80 $\text{Prescriber Specific: } \frac{67}{80} = 83.7\%$

Concurrent

Technical Specifications				
Metric				
Chronic: ≥60 days supply <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *The prescriber may or may not have prescribed both the opioid and the sedative. Only the prescriber who prescribed the opioid will receive an opioid prescribing report.		All prescriber	Prescriber specialty	Prescriber specific
	Numerator	Number of patients with ≥60 days (chronic) supply of sedative hypnotics, benzodiazepines, carisoprodol, barbiturates and a ≥60 days (chronic) supply of opioids dispensed in the calendar quarter by any prescriber	Number of patients with ≥60 days (chronic) supply of sedative hypnotics, benzodiazepines, carisoprodol, barbiturates and a ≥60 days (chronic) supply of opioids dispensed in the calendar quarter by any identified prescriber specialty	Number of patients with ≥60 days (chronic) supply of sedative hypnotics, benzodiazepines, carisoprodol, barbiturates and a ≥60 days (chronic) supply of opioids dispensed in the calendar quarter by any prescriber*
	Denominator	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids in the calendar quarter by any prescriber	Number of patients in the identified Medicaid population prescribed ≥60 days supply of opioids in the calendar quarter by any identified prescriber specialty	Number patients receiving chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) by identified prescriber in the calendar quarter
	Example Calculation	Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply opioids and ≥60 days supply sedatives, any prescriber = 8,340 Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply opioids, any prescriber = 33,769 $\text{All Prescribers: } \frac{8,340}{33,769} = 24.7\%$	Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply opioids and ≥60 days supply sedatives, any identified prescriber = 7,980 Number of distinct patients receiving ≥60 days supply opioids, any identified prescriber = 31,997 $\text{All Prescribers: } \frac{7,980}{31,997} = 24.9\%$	Number of patients with ≥60 days (chronic) supply of sedative hypnotics, benzodiazepines, carisoprodol, barbiturates and a ≥60 days (chronic) supply of opioids dispensed in the calendar quarter by any prescriber = 10 Number patients receiving chronic opioid therapy (≥60 days supply) by identified prescriber in the calendar quarter = 80 $\text{Prescriber Specific: } \frac{10}{80} = 12.5\%$



Appendix:

Please refer to the [Dr. Robert Bree Collaborative Opioid Prescribing Metrics](#) for the following lists:

- List of included opioids
- List of excluded opioids
- List of included sedatives